

**ARIZONA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION  
STATEWIDE ACCESS MANAGEMENT PROGRAM**

**Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) Meeting #3**

**206 S. 17<sup>th</sup> Avenue, State Transportation Board Room**

**June 22, 2006**

**9:30 a.m. – 12 noon**

**ATTENDING:**

Mike Kondelis, ADOT - Kingman District  
Dave Edwards, ADOT - Right-of-Way  
Bob Miller, ADOT – SPMG  
Paul O'Brien, ADOT - PreDesign  
Reza Karimvand, ADOT - Baja Region Traffic  
Donna Jones, ADOT - Permits  
Sylvia Hanna, ADOT - Permits  
Dale Buskirk, ADOT – TPD

John Harper, ADOT - Flagstaff District  
Arnold Burnham, ADOT – TPD  
Bryan Perry, Attorney General's Office/Transportation  
Ken Davis, FHWA  
Andy Smith, Pinal County  
Grant Buma, CRIT  
Paul Melcher, YMPO

Consultants: Rick Ensdruff, Phil Demosthenes, Caraly Foreman, Jennifer Spencer, Mike Connors

**NOT ATTENDING:** Mary Viparina, ADOT - VPM; Reed Henry, ADOT - Traffic; John Pein, ADOT – TPD; Cherie Campbell, PAG; Chris Fetzner, NACOG; Kevin Adam, League of AZ Cities & Towns, Julie Decker – BLM; Chuck Gillick, ADOT - N. Region Traffic; Daniel Williams, ADOT - Tucson District; Mike Manthey, ADOT – Traffic; Sam Elters, ADOT – State Engineer; Bob Hazlett, MAG; Luana Capponi, ASLD; Manish Patel, ASLD

**MEETING MINUTES:**

Dale Buskirk called the meeting to order and thanked everyone – especially non-ADOT members - for participating. Dale then mentioned that Arnold Burnham would be the project manager as of July 1<sup>st</sup>, 2006. Introductions were then made around the room.

Dale Buskirk then outlined the handouts. The handout packet included: Access Management Manual Table of Contents (Preliminary Draft); Program Objectives; Vision Statement; TAC Meeting # 3 PowerPoint slides; Technical Advisory Committee – Meeting # 3 Agenda; Agency Outreach Meeting Agenda from June 1, 2006; Benefits of a Statewide Access Management Program for Arizona pamphlet; and Arizona Statewide Access Management Program Overview pamphlet.

Rick Ensdruff reviewed the meeting agenda. The presentation and discussion would include the current practice report / financial element, vision statement / program objectives, project meeting summary and agency outreach meeting overviews. There would then be a break and the discussion, upon return, would involve the access management framework, classification system standards and the next steps for TAC.

Rick Ensdruff then discussed the current practice document. He mentioned the document, draft copy, was completed and would be available to TAC members in a couple of weeks. Dale Buskirk requested that an email notification be sent to members letting them know the document can be accessed via the website. Rick then addressed a previous request made about getting more financial information on access management

plans. Rick Ensdorff is gathering that information and once complete will be included in the document as an addendum.

Rick Ensdorff went on to discuss some of the handouts. The vision statement, since the last meeting, was refined. Also, since the last meeting, some objectives revisions were made, as requested. Rick Ensdorff then took the time to mention that feedback is an important part of the process and welcomed.

After the vision statement and objective updates, Rick Ensdorff then updated the group on the outreach meetings. He said there have been meetings with districts, which included district engineers. There have also been discussions with regional planning organizations. Dale Buskirk then asked if any meetings were scheduled with tribes. Rick Ensdorff mentioned he is working on that. Grant Buma said he sent a notice to tribes requesting feedback but hasn't received much back. Rick Ensdorff plans to work with tribes before summers (2006) end. The consultant (URS) will also schedule a meeting with PAG. Another important meeting, that Rick Ensdorff mentioned has already taken place, involved the regional engineers – traffic group - Reza Karimvand assisted with that. There was also a meeting that involved the statewide permit group. As for future meetings, one for July 6<sup>th</sup>, 2006 to discuss the overview of ADOT communication and community partnership has been planned.

As outlined on the "Agency Outreach Meeting" slide, the Navajo Nation is planned for a future meeting. Dale Buskirk asked that Rick Ensdorff include the Hopi tribe as well, he stressed it be added, along with the Navajo Nation, in the presentation. Reza Karimvand asked about Gila River and Ak-Chin. Reza Karimvand went on to say that Ak-Chin would be impacted by access management. Although Rick Ensdorff hasn't met with those tribes yet, he agreed they should be included in a discussion. Also on this slide, Rick Ensdorff said that the PAG and MAG committee have been updated on the project. Arnold Burnham suggested that Rick Ensdorff might want to speak with Acting Tucson District Engineer Greg Gentsch. In addition, Reza Karimvand offered contact information; Matt Burdick of CCP can get this to Rick Ensdorff.

Donna Jones questioned if Santa Cruz was involved – she didn't think they were. Rick Ensdorff said he thought a representative had attended some meetings, but he would have to verify. Reza Karimvand mentioned some upcoming RTE meetings and thought maybe they could be reached at that time.

The next slide, "Highlights From District Outreach Meetings", was then discussed. Rick Ensdorff said one of the main points was that the plan would need "teeth" and "tools" in order to work. It would also need to be consistent. It was then that Ken Davis said that "teeth", "tools" and "consistency" conflicts with "flexible." Rick Ensdorff recognizes that conflict and then went on to say that the program must be flexible in that not everything is black/white. We need to get to the same place, same goal, but can be flexible with the path we take. Reza Karimvand and Dale Buskirk think that flexible may not be a good word choice and offered that "balance" may be more appropriate, Rick Ensdorff will consider.

Grant Buma offered Highway 95 and a good example of partnering which included ADOT and local agencies.

The attention was then turned to the pamphlet handouts - Benefits of a Statewide Access Management Program for Arizona and Arizona Statewide Access Management Program Overview. As Rick Ensdorff said, these were used to brief those who couldn't attend the meetings – the idea was to get the word out. It was then noted by Rick Ensdorff that both public works and planning were invited to the outreach meetings, but the attendance was primarily public works.

As for the schedule of the plan, we are getting into the framework and classifications. Dale Buskirk pointed out that they are still on track to complete this project on schedule, Rick Ensdorff confirmed.

\*\*\* The group was then given a 10-minute break \*\*\*

Phil Demosthenes then addressed the group. He stressed the access management framework to be a manual and to take the framework and get it to a decision. As the "Access Management Framework" slide outlined, the manual would be "guidance for all access decisions." Reza Karimvand suggested that "guidance" be changed to "policy". Reza Karimvand then said, "How do we help folks, we tell them what to do."

The "Proposed Access Rules" slide was then shown. Phil Demosthenes outlined two of new rules, the first, policy standards and the second, access category assignments. This discussion prompted Brian Perry to ask, if rules would be written addressing categories – will criteria relating to each be there? Phil Demosthenes replied, yes. Dale Buskirk then said that the Attorney General must be comfortable. Brian reassured him that he is good on the concept and it sounds like a better plan than the one currently in place, but stressed he would need to see the rules.

Grant Buma asked if those needing access would be presumed guilty or innocent? For example, would someone need to prove the need for access? Phil Demosthenes stated that it starts with the importance of the road. Those involved parties (e.g. engineers, developers, etc.) would know what they need before they walk in the door. For instance, they would know that this section is considered a highway and therefore they would get "x" type of access. That process should work 95% of the time. Phil Demosthenes recognizes that will not be the case for all instances, but should work fine in the vast majority. Donna Jones mentioned that people have access rights and that permitting will do what they can to get access to those who need it. She further added the importance of being on "their" side, helping "them" out.

It was mentioned, by Grant Buma, that there is a difference with the Indian reservations, BIA DOT, for one, and Grant Buma wanted to know will they, and their process, be taken into account with how we interface with them. Phil Demosthenes said "yes." Grant then added that BIA DOT has completed road inventory and their classifications are different from ADOT. Phil Demosthenes stated that such differences would be addressed in the manual.

The next slide involved "Access Rule Content." Phil Demosthenes highlighted two important pieces involving permits. The first, a good design and the second point is to have a cut-off point. A cut-off point could be something like, if there were 200 cars per hour when the permit was issued and the appropriate permit for that type of traffic was approved, and sometime in the future there were more than the 200 cars, that permit would need to be addressed. Phil Demosthenes likened it to, someone that has a drivers license doesn't automatically get to drive trucks too – that's a different license. It was also mentioned that, currently, the permits expire when property is sold. Is this a good idea? It will be revisited during this process and the group can make a decision. Phil Demosthenes also said the appeal process would be rational and fair, however if a clear set of standards is in place things usually work out.

Grant Buma asked how to avoid access violations. Phil Demosthenes responded there are typically two types of violations. One involves using an old driveway beyond its use and the second is construction of illegal access points. Phil Demosthenes asked the group if someone could get an access permit before a building permit. Reza Karimvand responded that most local agencies have ADOT on their checklist. It was then that Dave Edwards asked about County appeals, how are they handled and by whom, what's the process? Phil Demosthenes replied that the group could design that.

The discussion then returned to another “Access Rule Content” slide. Phil Demosthenes said that changes to the classifications, once established, are few and far between. In Colorado, there were some years there was a handful, some years, none, but an average would no more than a couple in each year. As a note, Arizona’s state plan is updated every five years.

The next slide dealt with “Access Design Standards and Specifications.” It was mentioned that as a developer we need to make you (ADOT) happy, what do you need? There is a need to provide “customers” clear information for what they need to do to meet access requirements. Phil Demosthenes then discussed highway design mentioning that a Federal design hasn’t been done since 1952. How will the group describe that design so that it is consistent?

Phil Demosthenes then went over design variance and that variance “repaired” when need ends. He said to have the criteria in the process, ask, “Do you really need it?” If so, prove that it’s needed. It will involve balancing accessing rights to highway design. ADOT questions that if engineers won’t sign off on a design, why should they?

As for the Access Manual, of the nine chapters, there were six (due to time constraints) that had items that were highlighted. The six chapters, and highlighted items are outlined below:

Chapter 1 – Access Manual – Why it’s good for you.

Chapter 2 – Access Decision Making – The decision-making process, involves a flow chart, names, etc.

Chapter 3 – Access Permitting Rules – Taking the published regulations and dropping them into chapter 3. The burden will be on the private property owner – this is where the “teeth” come from. The tough part will be determining what goes into this chapter.

Chapter 4 – Coordination with Local and State Agencies – Any liabilities? Phil Demosthenes said of those states that already have a similar plan in place there haven’t been any issues, yet. The plan is very advisory.

Chapter 5 – Access Management Plans for Corridors – Can we make the access management plan legal, enforceable?

Chapter 6 – Traffic Studies and Engineering – Traffic Impact Analysis clarification, it reduces the workload on items if the private developer does the work for you.

It was mentioned that ADOT shouldn’t change a plan (design) and stamp it. The engineer should be responsible for submitting a “clean” plan and if ADOT makes all the changes, they could be liable. The developer’s engineer should be liable.

Mike Kondelis asked if the rules provide for staged improvement, e.g. driveways, turn lanes, signals? Phil Demosthenes said that could be done. He also said the regulations will provide the authority but how you do it may be tougher. Still on the subject of phasing, Reza Karimvand, said there is a record through the County, it’s part of the deed and that the new owner would take ownership of the phasing too.

Basically, the manual would provide functional guidance for the day-to-day decision making process.

The next slide discussed was the “Proposed Categories.” Phil Demosthenes discussed the categories and mentioned that TAC would need to determine when to go from Point A to Point B. For example, (see slide) if point A was a Rural Principal, and point B is an Urban Principal, what is each of their determinations? Point A to Point B would also involve the Rural Principal to the Rural Secondary.

Phil Demosthenes also mentioned that it may make sense that everything above the bold line not have access and that below the bold line to have access, but that too would need to be determined by TAC. This process is “how to slice the pie.”

Dale Buskirk then asked that TAC review the proposed categories and to get ideas back to the consultants. Ask, “What do you think about the categories?” Dale Buskirk would like this done in the next week – he stressed that we need buy-in at this level. Once the comments are received, they should be forwarded onto Rick Ensdorff who will take them and put them into the next proposed categories and which would eventually be finalized.

Grant Buma will work on getting BIA input of the classifications.

Reza Karimvand made the suggestion of using nomenclature that is similar for all agencies. For instance, currently, ADOT and BIADOT have different definitions for some terms.

The categories will be in a GIS-based program.

Dave Edwards asked if we should be using mileposts or stations as the markers for the database. He was concerned about using the mileposts as they can be moved. Dale Buskirk said that all mileposts are logged and tracked (video) and that should not be an issue. Reza Karimvand further added that stations are confusing. It was determined that mileposts would be used.

The “Rural Expressway ‘RX’” was then discussed. Dale Buskirk expressed concern that “expressway” is defined different by people and that it needs to be defined clearly in the manual, Phil Demosthenes agreed. Ken Davis added that a number of states use an expressway as a standard precursor of it becoming a freeway. Phil Demosthenes then said that the Rural Principal is the “work horse” of the plan.

Rick Ensdorff requested feedback about the proposed categories. He wants to know if there are too many categories, not enough?

Dale Buskirk requested everyone keep to the schedule, as November and December, often times, are months in which it is difficult to move things through due to holiday schedules and availability issues.

Reza Karimvand asked if an email would be sent to the regulatory traffic engineers, Rick Ensdorff replied that it would only be sent to TAC members, which includes those not in attendance today, at this time.

## **NEXT STEPS / FUTURE TAC MEETINGS**

Rick Ensdorff mentioned that the majority of district agency staff outreach workshops would be completed by next week. There are meetings for Show Low, Globe and Benson scheduled the last week of June. He is still working with the Holbrook District Engineer to set a date for their district’s workshop.

For the, CCP has been proposed to lead the facilitation and outreach for the business community / developers focus group meetings and Rick Ensdorff would provide technical support. The CCP meeting to discuss roles and responsibilities is scheduled for July 6<sup>th</sup> from 11am-noon.

The elected officials letter should be out early next week. It is important that we connect with them at this level. Dale Buskirk confirmed that he will ensure that CCP will take care of mailing this out. The letter will also be available on the website.

All related project documentation and resources will be on the website, once up, in the next couple of weeks.

Members were asked to email feedback about the proposed categories to Rick Ensdorff within this next week.

The next TAC meeting dates discussed were August 31, September 7 and 26, and October 24, 2006.

Tentative dates discussed for the next series of district agency staff workshops for classifications orientation will be scheduled from October 30 – November 21, with the exception of the dates of November 6-8.

Meeting adjourned at 12:00 p.m.